

# THE BOOK OF THE ARCHANGELS BY MOSES THE PROPHET

*A Greek Byzantine magical text*

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## Introduction

**T**he Book of the Archangels is a Christian magical text, traceable to the early Medieval period, but likely originating in late Antique Byzantium. This text was hitherto only published in its original Greek form, by R. Reitzenstein<sup>1</sup>, and is here translated for the first time into English. The Book consists of a protective / exorcistic invocation against several demonic forces from Greek and Byzantine lore. The title of the work resembles those of two earlier works that are mentioned in late Antique literature. One is referred to in the Gnostic text ‘On the origin of the World’ as the source of the names of the planetary archons (spiritual rulers) and their uses:

These are the seven forces of the seven heavens of chaos. And they were born androgynous, consistent with the immortal pattern that existed before them, according to the wish of Pistis: so that the likeness of what had existed since the beginning might reign to the end. You will find the effect of these names and the force of the male entities in the Archangelic (Book) of the Prophet Moses, and the names of the female entities in the first Book of Noraia<sup>2</sup>.

The other similarly titled work is the ‘Archangelic...[Teaching?]’, also attributed to Moses, and quoted in the Eight Book of Moses (PGM XIII), an important 4<sup>th</sup> century magical papyrus, where it is said to be the source of a series of holy names:

And as Moses says in the Archangelic [Teaching]: **‘ALDAZAŌ BATHAM MAKHŌR’, or ‘BA ADAM MAKHŌR RIZXAĒ ŌKEŌN PNED MEŌUPS PSUKH PHRŌKH PHER PHRŌ IAOTHKHŌ’<sup>3</sup>.**

The similarity of the subject matter may indicate a connection between all these works, but this cannot be proven before other corroborating sources are found. Strong parallels to the material here presented are also found in the Testament of Solomon, which lists demons and formulas to thwart their influence. The text itself is a series of invocations to be written as a phylactery or talisman. Many angels are invoked against demons, the personification of the evil eye (*baskhania*), and various dangers and calamities. The text is corrupt in certain parts, but its condition overall is decent.

Despite being attributed to Moses (as is typical of many contemporary and later magical texts), the text makes otherwise no mention of this Biblical figure.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Reitzenstein, *Poimandres: Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur* (1904) 292-302

<sup>2</sup> J. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (Brill 1996), 174

<sup>3</sup> Hans D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago University Press, 1996), 193

## The Book of the Archangels

P. 292. Phylactery for the servant of God (NN), which shields and guards thy servant (NN), the archangelic hymn, given unto Moses by God at mount Sinai , when He said unto him ‘take this hymn and wear it and thou shalt fear no demonic phantasm (or illusion). Let he who bears this phylactery kiss it and read it, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **BELÔN, THABÔR, AKANTHA NAMELA LAMBALA ARIMISAI BISAASMA ANALOUM SELEEM DIAKH BARAKHATHÔN BIBATHA KHAKHOUL ABABOUBAR ADONAE**, Lord - and invoke the name of great God and say , ‘I bind you, every wicked spirit and every sign, flee from the servant of God (NN) the bearer of the this phylactery, from his house and from his children, whatsoever demon may be, either female or male, either coming from wind or one that walketh on water. By that name (of God) I bind ye , wicked and unclean spirits, by Him who beholdeth the earth and causeth it to shake, **ADONAE, THÔDONAËL, ALAETH**, the terrible **SABAÔTH, BARAËTH, ADEËTH , EMANOUEËL** and the holy angels, whose (294) names are **GABRIËL MIKHAËL OURIËL RAPHAËL SAMISAËL HIERAMOUËL ABRASON XENAËL ARKAPHAËL AKHAËL SAPHOUËL ABRISËL EMOUËL ARMON ZËKHAËL METHODËM BRUZAËL** and the name of the great God, the living one, the former and enduring one, unto the vast and unending ages, so that they may not harm or enact iniquities or draw nigh the servant of God (NN), the bearer of this phylactery or his house or his vineyards or his land or his beasts , but let them flee to wild mountains and retreat thereat, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit , the triune Godhead. I bind ye, the unclean and wicked spirits, who dwell where two and three roads meet, whether (spirits) of the noon or of the night, by the great God, I bind ye, and by His own Son, who was crucified for our sake under Pontius Pilate; he who gave orders to Noah lest mankind should perish. I abjure ye by the great and exalted God, before whom stand countless angels and unto whom the Cherubim Principalities Authorities, Thrones, Dominions, Six-winged and many eyed ( Cherubim ) and Powers, sing in constant praise, exclaiming ‘Holy Holy Holy’

Notes to P. 294 -For when the unclean spirit exits from man , it goes to a land without water , seeking rest that shall not be found.

-If then, drugs (pharmaka) should be deposited and incantations bound and left in the foundations of the house or in the entrance or exit, or on the threshold or in a cavity or in a room , or in the dirt or in water or in the meeting of two or three roads, or on mountains or in grottos, or tombs or desolate places, or wherever drugs (incantations) are or wheresoever they are deposited, every wicked spirit and any encounter with them, be gone and flee from the servant of god (NN) from every entry or exit in this hour, and tread upon the heads of those that sent you or conspired with you , whether he might be a stranger or the same, a neighbor or someone passing by, a sorcerer or an enchantress.

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I bind ye myriads of spirits of 990 names of the Church of Evil, who are sworn unto king Solomon, that whithersoever ye hear the name of the lord **Sabaôth**, ye leave hence. Solomon, who received wisdom from God and shut them in bronze vessels, sealing them in the name of God, with the aid of the archangel Gabriel, he who holdeth power over *Baskkania* (the Evil Eye) , who stagnates the springs

and holds back the waters, who besets souls with hardships and deadly anger; and the archangel of the all powerful God bound her thus:

I bind thee *Baskhania*, by the great God whom the heavens fear, before whom the land is made barren and stirs, stars fall, the sun hides from his terrible wrath. Tremble and be thou bound wicked *baskhania*, along with all the evil spirits under thee, from the servant of God (NN) the bearer of this phylactery and from his house and from his children, remove from him every throe and pain in the forehead or the eyes , from the mouth , from the neck , the shoulders the hands and chest, and any bite, from the loins and from the belly , from bowels, any inflammation from the knees and legs, from the feet and from the brain and the 365 joints, and from the 25 vertebrae. Do thou flee hence to the wild mountains and settle in the house of mine enemies, shutting and muzzling their mouths that they may be unable to speak against me, in the name of God.

Phylactery for a man and his house: Phylactery of the servant of God (NN) (protection) from everything evil. Lord aid thy servant (NN) the bearer of this phylactery from wicked tongues or falsehood or aspersion, sorcery or slander and from any hostility towards the servant of God (NN). Let them be rendered powerless and motionless like the dead, that they may not pry or speak or act or slander or taunt, so that they may not work aught deadly against me or my servants, and that my lords or satraps may not utter or do anything guileful against me.

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I bind ye, wicked and unclean spirits, by Him who restrained the lions in the pit of Daniel, and preserved him unscathed, that ye obey what I say unto you, and may no longer hold sway over the servant of god (NN ) or over his house and over the children of him who bears this phylactery. Thus I bind ye by the archangels of lord **SABAÔTH** the all powerful, by the supreme angel **MIKHAËL**, he who has power over the human spirit , by **GABRIËL** who has power over merriment, by **OURIËL** who has power over health and by Raphael who has power over cure. + **MIKHAËL** over Judgment , **LOUËL** over Sleep, **SIKHAËL** over shiver and fever, + **RAPHAËL** over pain and suffering , **MELKHOIDON** over water and springs , **RAPHAËL** over rivers **SARAZAËL** over mountains , **SAMOUSAËL** over the wooden adobe , and to **EMANOUËL** , the son and word of our God , who will judge the living and the dead, and to all of the archangels, who stand before the throne of God , **MIKHAËL**, **GABRIËL**, **OURIËL** and **RAPHAËL**, **ENOPRIËL**, **BARNABAËL**, **IOUËL**, **TATHÊËL**, **MELÔN**, **EXANKANTHÁ** **ASTENAËL**, and by every single one over the hosts, to perform as ye were commanded (to the evil spirits). Let all of God's holy angels, and ministers of his majesty, aid the servant of god (NN) the bearer of this phylactery. Repel all evil from him and from his house and from his children , and grant unto him victory over enemies seen and unseen, yea lord Jesus Christ, the lord our God, begotten of thy holy mother and all of thy saints. Amen.

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Prayers of saint Gregory the Theologian: **NASAËL** who ruleth the mountains **SAMAËL** of the river; **APHEMEËL**, of the house (*of God?*); **SUKHAËL** of the shivering fever; **IÔËL**, of sleep; **RAGOUËL** of the oxen, sheep and goats; **MEKHISEDEK** of the river and of wells; **AGATHOËL**, of triumph ( victory ) and

of merriment; **PHLOGOTHÔÊL**, he of the the thunderclap and hail; **PHARMAKHAÊL** of the bed (*or* bedchamber) **SARISAÊL**, of peace, day and night; **SAÊL** of afflictions and of those who suffer, they who coabide before God the All Ruling, **MIKHAÊL**, **GABRIÊL**, **OURIÊL** and **RAPHAÊL**, by the prayer of saint John the Theologian and of Gregory and by the seal of fate, coming to judge the living and the dead, our lord Jesus Christ, and the angels of great God, **MIKHAÊL** in the spirit of man, **GABRIÊL** of joy, **OURIÊL** of health, **RAPHAÊL** of pain and sickness; **SAMOUÊL** of precipitation and hail; **SAMIZAÊL** of wood; **IOÊL** of sleep; + **OURIÊL** of vigil; **SUKHAÊL** of shivering and of fever; **APHAMAÊL** of love + **OURIÊL** of peace, **SAMOUÊL** of thunder, **AMOIKHIÊL** of lightning; **KRÍTIMOS** of judgment, these aforementioned angels and archangels are the ones found before God. I invoke ye in the name of **MIKHAÊL** the archangel, that you give answer concerning the sorcery and inquire about it, whence she cometh and whither she goeth. And she answered: I go forth to cut off the Seven sources of water, to burn fields, and to spread dust

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Nerves and bones I crush, empty minds, cut off the youth, separate men and women, disrupt the spleens of children, deceive the eyes and defile virgins and ruin their beauty, and every sickness I inflict upon man she did. **MIKHAÊL** the archangel, may he exorcise (it) by the Omniregent God, and by the seven mouthed pit of Hell. Fear thou O Baskhania, the great name of God, shouldst thou disobey these mine commands, Lord Sabaôth shall dispatch an angel to torment and restrain thee in the Furnace of Burning Fire; I exorcise thee, **STRAGGALIA** (*she who strangulates*), multiform one, she who approaches small children, who has iron hands (Furies) which drag away children and steal them and kill them.

These are the names of the holy angels and archangels who nullify *Geloun* and any unclean spirit male and female, <say> in the Hebrew speech **MIKHAÊL**, **GABRIÊL**, **OURIÊL** and **RAPHAÊL**, **MANOUSAMOUÊL**, **ABESABEK**, **SIKHAEL**, **EREREÊL**, **IABOUÊL** **SABAÔTH** **ADONAÊL**, **ELIAR**, **ARAKHÊM** **MAROUÊL** **KHÊZA** **IAZAKHAÊL** **MISAÊL**, (expelling the breath with strength), avaunt every unclean spirit! As the archangel **MIKHAÊL** descended from heaven, he came upon an unclean spirit who was hairy up to her legs, having burning eyes and the archangel **MIKHAÊL** said unto her 'whence comest thou, and whither goest thou?

The filthy one answered, saying to him: I enter the house as a snake, as a dragon, as a serpent, four legged beasts (cattle). I wreak destruction wheresoever I enter (or when I leave). I inflict wounds on women, making their hearts ache, causing their milk to dry, the hair of the householder to fall from fear, and again I make them grow (?) and then I slay them. My name is **PAXAREA** and thus I am called. When holy Mary bore the Word of Truth, I betook myself to her, caused her to falter, wonder, and be deceived. And the archangel **MIKHAÊL**, having seized her by her right braid, and saying unto her the archangel **MIKHAÊL** give me

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thy twelve names, and she said, the first name is **GELOU**, the second **MORPHOUS**, the third **KARANIKHOS**, the fourth **AMIXOUS**, the fifth **AMIDAZOU**, the sixth **MARMALAT**, the seventh **KARANÊ**, the eighth **SELÊNOUS**, the ninth **ABIZÁ**, the tenth **ARIANÊ**, the eleventh **MARÁN**, the twelfth + **MARMALAT** (repeated). That are my twelve names and thy name, Archangel **MIKHAÊL**, and thy name **SISINIE**, and **SINODÔRE**, that I may not enter the house of the servant of God, (NN), in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, <forever and ever, unto the eternal aeons.

<thou> conceived from Spirit, repel all wickedness from thy servant (NN), Thou who wert begotten of a Virgin, Thou who wast brought by the angel, repel all evil from thy servant (NN). He who hath said 'hearken and pray', He who opened the eyes of the blind from birth, who raised Lazarus from the grave, the immaculate lamb, (by) the names of the twenty four elders which are: **ENÔÊL ARNEÊL APHAÊL ROKHTHIÊL, BRIX,TRIPHAÊL, BRÍGMATOS, ÊMITHRIÊL, PHTORÔRÔÎ, SUMÔRAS, NAPHAÊL, EREREÊL, ANÊL, + TRIPHEÊL, ZÔXÔBRAÊL, TARXIÊL, ANIÊL, XIPHIÊL , ABNIÊL , APHEDEEÊL, ZAMIÊL, KHALALAÊL, AZAZÔÊ, MAMÔNA**, here then are the names of the seven ministers : **NAKENAÊL, KHIÊL** and **IÊL** + manifest, **RAPSANAÊL , ATHANESTÁN** , + ( *αναλιπτικός* , *in greek the word bears similarities to the word transcendent see also the French 'analeptique' , it also refers to stimulants and drugs that vitalize , tonic* ) .

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, as our Lord Jesus Christ walked unto the village of Gethsemane with John, He heard a great and terrible sound arising from the earth and John said, 'Lord what is this rumbling and tumult upon the earth? But Jesus left John, and spake into his right ear: 'leave the child, leave the child thou daemon who attacks children, from the house of the servant of God (NN). Be still, and stand in awe. Amen.

(23 , 3-6) ..... : I, having a holy spirit residing within, hurled her, into the burning fire and not having suffered one ill from her, retired to sleep: I adjure ye, who are half of the generations of the beasts that crawl upon the earth, &c..

Furthermore, write the names of the saintly seven youths of Ephesus (**Iamblikhos, Exakoustodianós, Martinos, Antônios, Iôannês, Maximilianos, Dionusios**), upon olive leaves.